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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government Consultation Document

Consultation on a Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050

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Action required: Responses by 31 October 2016

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Consultation on a Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050

Overview

Section 78(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 requires Welsh Ministers to adopt a strategy stating how they propose to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. Section 78(4) requires the Welsh Ministers to keep the strategy under review and enables them from time to time to adopt a new strategy. Therefore, this consultation seeks your views on our proposals for the strategy which will supersede the current Welsh language strategy: *A living language: a language for living* (2012–2017) when that strategy's period comes to an end. In line with the duty at Section 78(5) of the Act, we are publishing this consultation document to give everyone a chance to have their say on our plans to realise our vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

How to respond

Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by **31 October 2016** at the latest.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

A living language: a language for living – Moving forward (2014)

Welsh Medium Education Strategy: Next Steps (2016)

The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.gov.wales/consultations

Contact details

For further information:
Welsh Language Unit
Welsh Language Division
Education and Public Services
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail:

UnedlaithGymraegWelshLanguageUnit@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 060 4400

Data protection How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

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Foreword

I have campaigned for the Welsh language for many years and it is therefore a privilege to lead on the Welsh language portfolio on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Our ambition as a Government is to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050. There is no doubt that this is a challenge, but I believe that we need to set such an ambition if we are to make a real difference where the Welsh language is concerned.

I am very clear that it is our responsibility as a Government to set the direction and provide leadership for this work. This Government has the will and the commitment to do so. But it is also vital to us all as a nation to take ownership of the challenge.

Government cannot insist that a parent uses the Welsh language with a child. It cannot insist that children play together in Welsh. And it cannot require someone to use the Welsh language at the post office.

This is part of a plan for us as a nation and as a society. It is for all of us. That is why I am pleased to announce this consultation on the long-term strategy for the Welsh language.

We have set out our proposals in this document, and of course I'm keen for as many people as possible to respond. But I am not going to sit back and wait for your responses. Over the next few months I want to meet as many people as possible across the country to discuss, have conversations and share ideas. I want people to feel ownership of the vision, and I want to engender support for the vision.

One clear message contained in this document is that we need to get to a position where the Welsh language is a perfectly natural element of all aspects of everyday life. If we want to achieve that, the whole nation has to be part of the discussion – fluent Welsh speakers, Welsh speakers who are reluctant to use the language, new speakers who have learned the language, or people who do not count themselves as Welsh speakers. Everyone has a part to play, and I want everyone to contribute.

Together, we can grow the Welsh language and create a truly bilingual Wales.

Alun Davies AM

Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language

Section 1 – Executive summary

The year 2050

The Welsh language is thriving, and the number of speakers has risen to a million. It is natural to use it in every aspect of life, and among those who do not speak it there is goodwill towards it and an appreciation of its contribution to the culture and economy of Wales.

2016 – now and next

Our vision is clear – to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050. For us to achieve that, we believe that several things need to happen: more children in Welsh-medium education, better planning in relation to how people learn the language, more easy-to-access opportunities for people to use the language, a stronger infrastructure and a revolution to improve digital provision in Welsh, and a sea change in the way we speak about it.

This document sets out our strategic priorities on how to reach a million speakers, and describes the key things that need to happen if we are to achieve the necessary changes.

Our priorities

The Welsh language is one of Wales' treasures. It is part of that which defines us as a people, and an integral part of our everyday lives. According to the most recent Census in 2011 there were 562,000 Welsh speakers in Wales. On that basis, the aim of this strategy will be to almost double the number of Welsh speakers by the middle of the century. In order for that to happen, we believe we need to prioritise 6 key areas for action.

1 – Planning and Language Policy: For all the other elements of this strategy to be effective, we need to plan sensibly and deliberately to put the appropriate programmes in place at the appropriate time. For instance, if we are to increase the number of Welsh speakers on the scale needed, the first step in any strategy must be to create enough teachers to teach children through the medium of Welsh.

2 – Normalisation: By fostering a willingness to use Welsh among people who speak it, and goodwill towards it among those who don't, we want the language to be a normal part of everyday life. This means that people feel comfortable beginning a conversation in Welsh, that they can expect to receive services in Welsh, and that people are used to hearing it and seeing it.

3 – Education: We need to see a significant increase in the number of people receiving Welsh-medium education and who have Welsh language skills, as it is only through enabling more people to learn Welsh that we will reach a million speakers. Early years provision is also essential, as the earlier a child comes into contact with the language, the more opportunity he or she has to become fluent.

4 – People: As well as education, it will be essential to increase the number of people who transmit the language to their children. We also need more opportunities for people to use it in a variety of settings, and encourage more of them to take up those opportunities. These include opportunities as individuals, for the family, by taking part in local activities, or as members of networks or wider communities of interest that may be scattered throughout the world.

5 – Support: It is essential to develop a robust and modern infrastructure to support the language in order to increase the number of speakers, improve their confidence, and make it easier to use in a wide variety of settings. Digital resources, a healthy and diverse media, a responsive and modern translation profession, and a corpus which reflects and maintains the status of Welsh as a living language, are essential for Welsh speakers whatever their ability.

6 – Rights: Legislation provides an unequivocal basis for organisations to act in support of the language and for Welsh speakers to use it. We need to encourage individuals to take up the opportunities that come with these rights. The long term aim is to move to a situation where these rights are embedded as a natural part of services.

We propose these six development areas as a basis for deliberate action over the long term to realise the ambition of a million speakers.

Section 2 – Introduction

Why a long term strategy?

The target of a million speakers by 2050 calls for long term planning in order to make the necessary progress.

This document builds on previous Welsh Government strategies - *laith Pawb, laith fyw: iaith byw*, and *The Welsh-medium Education Strategy*. However looking at the long term means that with this strategy we must do things differently. This reflects the desire to set an ambitious and truly strategic direction for each area that influences the language. It also reflects the need for creativity if we are to reach the target of a million speakers.

This long term thinking chimes with the Welsh Government's recognition of the idea that language planning is something that can be measured over the period of a generation, and that there is a need to stand firm and recognise that the early years of this strategy will see steps taken to lay the foundations to enable this increase to happen. We foresee, therefore, that the largest increase in the number of Welsh speakers will happen towards the end of this strategy.

"A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language" is one of 7 wellbeing goals in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This means there is already a duty on a number of public bodies listed in the Act to achieve that goal in the long term, as one of the steps to create the kind of Wales we want to see in 2050.

One of this strategy's key messages is that the language needs to be considered and mainstreamed in every plan, policy and strategy across a wide range of organisations, as well as when making legislation.

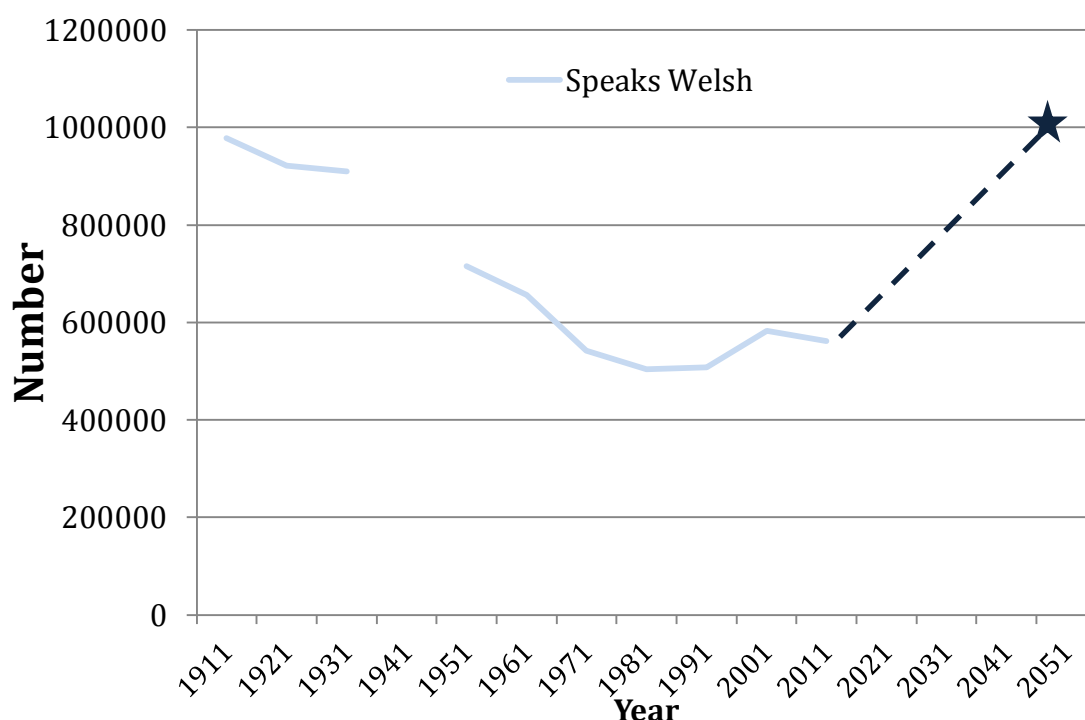
Consultation question: Do you agree with the approach of creating a long term strategy for the Welsh language?

The challenge

The ambition of a million Welsh speakers is challenging, but achieving it would reverse the decline seen in this respect over the course of the twentieth century. In 1911 there were almost a million (977,000) Welsh speakers in Wales aged three and above.

The following chart shows the fortunes of the Welsh language over the course of the last century. According to Census figures, we need approximately 438,000 new Welsh speakers by 2050 to reach a million. It should be remembered that this is in addition to maintaining the present number of speakers as it is, with deaths and out-migration also affecting the present number of speakers.

Chart 1: number of people aged three and over who can speak Welsh, Census 1911-2011, as well as our ambition for 2050 (a)



(a) Note that no Census was conducted in 1941.

If there were to be an increase in the number of Welsh speakers during this strategy's lifespan, our assumption is that it would in all likelihood be slower than the dotted line above at the beginning of the period, accelerating towards the end. The task during the first part of this strategy will be to lay the foundations to allow this faster progress to take place.

Difference between sources

Although the Census is the key source of information for the number of people who are able to speak Welsh, and this is our starting point, other sources also offer estimates in this respect.

The Annual Population Survey gathers information about respondents' ability to speak Welsh, and how often they do so. The National Survey for Wales also collects this information, but also asks how fluent respondents are in Welsh, however this is for adults 16 years old and above only.

The Annual Population Survey estimates that about 26 to 27 percent (approximately 810,500) people three years old and above can speak Welsh. The National Survey for Wales estimates that about 23 to 24 percent (about 607,000) of people 16 years old and above can speak Welsh.

We don't know exactly why there is such a difference between the estimates, but differences between the way the surveys and Census are conducted are likely to have influenced the results. There are questions concerning the reliability of the Annual Population Survey data, therefore, and a project is underway to try to better

understand the differences between the Census and National Survey for Wales in this respect.

Language acquisition

If we look at Census figures, language transmission and the education system are the two areas that are essential for creating new speakers and for the language to thrive. The most recent Census figures show the importance of transmission within families where Welsh is spoken by both parents, and the importance of increasing the rate of transmission within bilingual families. At present, in households where both parents speak Welsh, 82 per cent of children between three and four years old can speak Welsh. In households where one parent speaks Welsh but the other does not, 45 per cent of children between three and four years old can speak Welsh.

If the rate of transmission had been 100 per cent (i.e. every parent of a child between three and four years old in households where at least one adult can speak Welsh transmits the language to their child) there would have been 6,300 additional Welsh speakers in the 2011 Census. There is a limit to the additional number of Welsh speakers that can be created through transmission from one generation to the next unless more parents decide, in the first place, to learn Welsh, and secondly to pass it on to their children. This is why it is essential to create speakers through the education system who will transmit the language to their own children.

We recognise that the education system is the main way for ensuring that children are able to develop their Welsh skills, and for creating new speakers. Data from schools tells us how many children are educated through the medium of Welsh. Currently around 22 per cent (about 7,900) of learners in year 2 are assessed in Welsh (first language). If this were to increase to 50 per cent, this would mean approximately 18,000 learners (on the basis of the size of the year 2 cohort in 2015), which would mean about 10,000 additional children. This equates to about 331 new Welsh-medium classes across Wales, and shows the importance of the education system's commitment to creating a million speakers.

It is also important to remember the importance of people who learn Welsh as adults. According to the latest data there are 15,520 people learning Welsh as adults. Further work is needed to get a clearer picture of the numbers who are learning Welsh and are confident to use it, and the new National Centre for Learning Welsh will address this.

Consultation question: Apart from a million Welsh speakers by 2050, there are no specific targets associated with this draft strategy as it stands. In your opinion, are there any targets or milestones that should be used to map the journey and measure our progress towards a million speakers?

We will use your suggestions to draft a blueprint or roadmap plotting the intended journey over the years to come.

Section 3 – Achieving the vision

Our vision is clear: we want to see a million Welsh speakers by 2050. How can we achieve this and meet the challenges outlined in the previous section?

It is clear to the Welsh Government that meeting this challenge calls for wide-ranging changes. We need to push the boundaries in order to make the changes needed for people to be confident to learn or use the Welsh language.

It must be acknowledged that the proposals in this draft strategy are not the beginning of the journey. There has been significant progress in terms of governmental support for the Welsh language over the past 15 years. Today, the Welsh language has official status, legislation is in place which gives Welsh speakers the right to Welsh language services, with a Commissioner to oversee the implementation of these rights. There is also a statutory basis for planning Welsh-medium education provision, and "a thriving Welsh language" has been included in one of the national well-being goals.

This draft strategy takes us forward to the next stage in our linguistic development as a nation and builds on the foundations already in place.

We are therefore clear that this consultation is about *how* we achieve our ambition.

Six areas of development

The remainder of this document presents proposals which convey the Government's commitment to influence the decisions made by people at key points in their lives. The intention is to ensure that the language is a relevant and attractive part of life from cradle to grave.

We have identified six strategic areas of development for achieving the vision:

1. Language planning and policy
2. Normalisation
3. Education
4. People
5. Support
6. Rights

General consultation questions:

Do you broadly agree with the six areas of development outlined in the strategy – Planning, Normalisation, Education, People, Support and Rights?

How can you contribute to achieving the strategy's vision?

Section 4 – Areas of development

In this section we introduce the six strategic areas and our main objectives, and suggest a number of steps to achieve the vision of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Development area 1: Planning and language policy

If we are to increase the number of speakers on the scale needed, we need to start with planning. This means mainstreaming the Welsh language so that it is an integral part of strategic planning at every level. Disseminating an understanding of deliberate language planning will be an important part of realising this, as will the need for consistent research and data collection in order to fully understand the situation of the Welsh language.

Because of the importance of education, ensuring there is a workforce that meets the need for Welsh-medium education and training is the starting point for creating more speakers. This means planning to support the training of teachers and learning assistants, expanding sabbatical schemes for the present workforce, and significantly increasing the number of workers in the childcare and early years sectors.

Objective:

Create a workforce with the appropriate skills to educate and provide services through the medium of Welsh.

How:

- Significantly increase the number of teachers and early years practitioners who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh, to enable us to educate more children and young people through the medium of Welsh.
- Increase the number of Welsh-medium childcare places, in order to satisfy the need among parents and carers and start as many children as possible on the journey to having two languages.
- Increase the number of people who are able to work through the medium of Welsh in a number of specialist areas and services, so that Welsh services are available to those who choose them.
- Normalise language planning and ensuring there are appropriate leaders in the correct positions, so that Welsh is an automatic part of workforce planning and when considering which skills are required.

Objective:

Ensure the Welsh language is higher on the agenda so that there is an awareness of the language, and positive action on its behalf, at the highest level within organisations, businesses and the political sphere.

How:

- Better strategic planning for the Welsh language across government and the wider public sector, especially in relation to economic development.
- As economic infrastructure is an essential part of language planning at the local level, develop our understanding of how to make the most of this and ensure that Welsh is considered at the beginning of any developments, projects or programmes.

Consultation question: Are there any other objectives or actions that should be included in this document in order to improve planning in relation to the Welsh language?

Development area 2: Normalisation

In order for our steps to plan for the Welsh language to be successful, we need to make the most of the goodwill that exists towards the language. We want the Welsh language to be a completely normal part of everyday life, with goodwill towards it and a willingness to use it.

There is a general awareness that people's attitudes can be very influential, be that a willingness or reluctance on the part of Welsh speakers to use the language. We therefore need to better understand that which influences attitudes and linguistic choices, with an initial focus on linguistic identity and the psychology of Welsh language use.

Evidence suggests that positive attitudes towards the language already exist, but that there is a disparity between these attitudes and the number of people who speak Welsh. The challenge is to work towards a situation where this goodwill towards the language is converted into speakers. We want to see Welsh as a normal part of everyday life – a language of habitual use for those who speak it, a natural choice for bilingual people, and accepted by those who don't speak it. We have already alluded to the importance of this in our policy document, *Bwrw Mlaen (Moving Forward)*:

“To change the patterns of linguistic behaviour we need to change the way we talk and feel about the language... Too often the debate around Welsh is focused on challenges, linguistic retreat and roadblocks to change.”

Objective:

For the Welsh language to be a natural element of being a citizen in Wales in order to make it relevant to everyone, whether they speak Welsh, English or any other language, and elicit an appreciation of it among people moving to Wales.

How:

- Foster a situation where it is completely normal for people to use the Welsh language in their dealings with the state and public institutions in Wales.
- Increase people's confidence to use Welsh so that they are more likely to begin conversations in Welsh and choose to use services in Welsh.
- Ensure that the Welsh language is more prominent in the audio-visual environment, so that it is evident it has official status and is an integral part of the linguistic landscape of Wales.
- Improve our understanding of what affects people's linguistic practices at key points in their lives by conducting long term longitudinal research.

Consultation question:

In your opinion, how else can we engender goodwill towards the Welsh language in order to further normalise it?

What else is needed to convert positive attitudes towards the language into speakers?

Development area 3: Education

By planning to ensure there are enough teachers to educate through the medium of Welsh, and by making the most of goodwill towards the language, this will create a positive environment for more people to learn Welsh.

The statutory education system is the principal method the Welsh Government has for ensuring children can develop their Welsh language skills, and for creating new speakers, but we must ensure that opportunities exist at every point in an individual's life to learn Welsh and learn through Welsh.

We will improve strategic planning processes for every phase of education and training in order to ensure growth in Welsh-medium education. This will be part of a cohesive policy that will include promotion, linguistic progression between different phases of education, and raising awareness of the advantages of Welsh-medium education.

The Welsh Government's commitment to introducing one continuum of learning for the Welsh language, is an important step in this respect. Perhaps the best way of describing the ability to communicate through Welsh is to compare it with an arc, or "continuum", that individuals can access at different points according to their ability. We should look at everyone on that arc in a positive light, and encourage people who use Welsh at any level to consider themselves Welsh speakers, without imposing artificial labels.

Our education system must promote ambition for the Welsh language, and offer enough flexibility to meet different needs from different parts of society. As we move forward, our policy in this respect must move away from the concept of "Welsh as a second language" towards an integrated and cohesive consideration of the language as a genuinely living language. It stands to reason that there will be challenges as we develop a new Curriculum for Wales which satisfies our aspirations, but the Welsh Government is fully committed to this approach.

Objective:

A significant increase in the number of children and young people educated through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in order to create more speakers.

An increase in the number of young people leaving school in Wales with bilingual skills that can be used in the workplace.

How:

- Increase the capacity to provide Welsh-medium education by supporting local authorities to plan to increase provision through their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).
- Move schools along the language continuum to increase the availability of Welsh-medium school places.

- Meet the increasing demand for Welsh-medium education through capital investment where appropriate.
- Expand the Welsh language immersion provision for latecomers, based on the latest evidence, and ensure that the provision is consistent.
- Teach Welsh as one language in order to create a continuum to improve progression and raise standards.

Objective:

Improve rates of progression between the different phases of education and the workplace (early years, primary education, secondary education, post-16 education, higher education, apprenticeships, the workplace), and ensuring there are opportunities for adults to learn the language.

How:

- Ensure that Welsh-medium courses are a natural choice for people in post-16 or higher education.
- Use the findings of longitudinal research to ascertain when specific interventions are most likely to increase the rate of progression.
- Develop innovative opportunities to enable new speakers to become confident to use Welsh in the workplace, socially and in the home.

Objective:

Ensure that educational institutions prepare young people to use Welsh confidently in informal and social situations.

How:

- Continue to develop and implement a framework which supports schools to encourage and increase pupils' informal use of Welsh in a variety of settings.

Consultation question: Are there any other objectives or actions that should be included in this document in order to increase the number of people who learn Welsh?

Development area 4: People

On a basic level, language exists because of people's interaction with each other. As with any language, people need opportunities to use Welsh whatever their ability or background. This entails opportunities for people as individuals or collectively, as part of a community.

We recognise that the meaning of "community" now includes networks of common interest and digital networks, which not only connect people scattered in cities or in the countryside, but which also bridge continents. That being so, we need to consider to what extent the emphasis on 'community' as a residential, geographical entity is still important? Is the density of speakers created as people travel to work more important than the neighbourhood where they live? Is the density of Welsh speakers on the ground as significant as it once was? Do we also need to continue to acknowledge the importance of communities in the traditional or historical sense?

There is a close relationship between language acquisition (it is widely recognised that the primary means of language acquisition are through transmission in the home, and education) and language use, because people need opportunities to practice and use the language in order to learn successfully. This relationship can be compared with the different strands of a rope, with the emphasis on one or another strand increasing or decreasing at different periods of an individual's life. The challenge for us as a government is to influence the decisions people make at these key points, and ensure the language is a relevant, attractive part of life from the cradle to the grave.

That being so, opportunities are needed at every stage of the linguistic journey, and in situations as various as all the ways people can choose to live their lives. It follows that if people want to make the most of these opportunities, they must also be offered proactively, without having to ask for them in Welsh. Ultimately the vision is for people who speak Welsh at any level of ability to be able to take up every opportunity to use it.

We must also remember that if we are to make Welsh a normal part of everyday life in Wales, and engender wide support for our efforts in relation to language acquisition, it will be essential to increase its use amongst those who already speak it.

Our efforts to increase the use of Welsh will depend on a combination of language acquisition, confidence and fluency, the quality of opportunities to use it, and people's eagerness to use their skills.

Objective:

Increase the rate of transmission within families in order to ensure that future generations can speak Welsh and use it.

How:

- Increase the opportunities for parents and carers to learn Welsh or gain confidence in their skills, in order to increase the amount of Welsh spoken in the home.

Objective:

Ensure that more places exist where it is completely obvious that Welsh is the natural language, so that it feels completely normal and safe to use Welsh as the default language.

Support communities or neighbourhoods where Welsh is used naturally as the common language.

How:

- Continue to support organisations and centres which offer Welsh services as the default.
- Ensure that there are a variety of social opportunities for people to increase their confidence and improve their skills as they learn Welsh.
- Improve our understanding of the local factors which affect the Welsh language, and of the discussions about how the definition of “community” is evolving, and plan accordingly.

Consultation question: Are there any other objectives or actions that should be included in this document in order to increase the number of people who use Welsh?

Development area 5: Support

To create the conditions to increase the number of people who speak and use the language, a strong infrastructure is needed.

Living languages evolve constantly and reflect the world around them. In order to ensure that Welsh continues to be a modern, relevant language, we believe that we need to maintain a modern linguistic infrastructure (including corpora, dictionaries, and terminology resources) and that it is essential to invest in technology – a constantly changing area – in order to be able to use Welsh in as many ways as possible.

Long term investment in this infrastructure will remain a priority in order to put the language on a sure footing for the future.

Objective:

Ensuring the infrastructure for the Welsh language is up to date and continues to develop.

How:

- Long term investment in corpus, dictionary and terminology projects, as well as educational resources.
- Provide leadership in relation to translation so that the profession develops in a way that meets the demand.

Objective:

Continue to develop the technological and digital provision to enable everyone to live their lives in Welsh.

How:

- Invest in projects to create a technological infrastructure (computer assisted translation, artificial intelligence, voice recognition technology etc) so that Welsh can be used on electronic devices.
- Influence the private sector to invest in language technology in Wales, in partnership with the language technology sector internationally.

Objective:

Diverse and relevant media are available in Welsh.

How:

- Although responsibility for broadcasting is not devolved to the Welsh Government, exert influence to ensure that the offer in relation to television and radio and all different kinds of media remain contemporary and relevant to Welsh speakers of all ages.
- Ensure that a wide choice of Welsh publications are available in various formats, in order to meet the demand from different audiences.

Consultation question: Are there any other objectives or actions that should be included in this document in order to improve the infrastructure that helps people to use Welsh?

Development area 6: Rights

Over the last half a century, several pieces of legislation have been passed which underpin people's right to use Welsh, their freedom to use the language, and to receive Welsh language services. The most recent of these is the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, under which the Welsh Language Commissioner's office was established. Although the Measure in and of itself does not mean that more people speak Welsh, it is a solid foundation upon which to build for the future, as it gives the language official status in Wales, introduces duties through the Welsh language standards on the basis that services are offered proactively, and permits any interference with people's freedom to use Welsh to be investigated.

The aim of the present rights is to improve the services provided by organisations which come under the Welsh language standards. We need to encourage individuals to take up the opportunities that come with these rights. The long term aim is to move to a situation where these rights are embedded as a natural part of services.

We will continue to review the legislation over the coming period in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and reinforces Welsh speakers' confidence to use services.

Objective:

Ensure the legislative foundation for the Welsh language is appropriate and up to date.

How:

- Make the most of the Welsh language standards as a way of improving awareness of the language amongst people and organisations, and to give people the right to receive services in Welsh.
- Strike a better balance between promotion, legislation and regulation.

Consultation question: Are there any other objectives or actions that should be included in this document in order to improve the rights of Welsh speakers?

Section 5 – Short term action: the first five years

Whilst our vision is a long term one, and the number of speakers is something that is measured on a generational basis, we must act to put the foundations in place now. And these actions must reflect our ambition.

We are clear that the education system will be key in creating future Welsh speakers. Our education system is, of course, completely dependent on our teachers. Therefore our priority over the next five years will be to increase the the system's capacity to meet the need to expand Welsh-medium education and improve the way Welsh is taught in our English-medium schools. This entails training new teachers and improving the skills of the present teaching workforce.

At the same time, we want to improve the regime for local authorities to plan for increasing Welsh-medium education. Work will continue to plan and develop a new curriculum for Wales, including the aspiration to introduce one continuum of learning for the Welsh language.

Beyond the education system, another priority for the next five years will be to develop and embed a culture of systemic planning for the Welsh language at every level of governance. Our first focus in this respect will be training leaders to plan for the Welsh language, and we will carefully consider our response to the *Language, Work and Bilingual Services* report, which was presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government. Our work to ensure that clear measures are in place to mitigate the effects of the New Wylfa development on the Welsh language will be important in the context of the language's situation in north-west Wales, and will be an opportunity to learn valuable lessons about how to combine economic development and language planning.

Our lives are increasingly dependent on technology and the internet, and we must take decisive steps so that Welsh is, by default, a central part of any developments. We expect to see large strides being made during the next five years to ensure the technological infrastructure is in place to enable companies of all sizes to use and create digital tools and services for Welsh speakers.

While a number of our steps in the short term will create the infrastructure to increase the number of Welsh speakers over a longer period, not every language planning intervention is necessarily long term in nature. For instance, a parent's decision to introduce Welsh to a child from birth can bear fruit within three years, and the decision to send a child to Welsh-medium education can also bring positive results in a short period of time. Our Cymraeg for Kids programme will therefore be an important priority.

If we take an individual's period in school, there are a number of points where decisions – be they academic or social in nature – influence his or her linguistic journey. Extending the Welsh Language Charter – a framework to encourage children to use Welsh socially – to schools across Wales will be an important step in embedding a Welsh identity in our children. This will enable them to see for themselves the importance of the language, insist on speaking it and, in future, transmit it to their children.

We are entering a new period from the perspective of opportunities for adults to learn Welsh, with new structures in place that will lead to innovative opportunities for learners to gain confidence to use it in the workplace, socially, and in a family setting.

Being able to see and hear Welsh on the high street is an important part of normalising the language in our communities. We will work with partners to ensure that practical support is available to organisations that do not come under the Welsh language standards, in order to mainstream the language into the services they offer the public. This is an important part of our promotion work, and we will develop further plans to market and raise awareness of Welsh to support people to use it in ways that are practical, creative and enjoyable.

All this means creating detailed new policies, targeting areas where they are needed most, and ensuring they work towards the long term goals outlined in this draft strategy.

Consultation question: The Welsh Government will publish a series of detailed policies in specific policy areas during the strategy's lifespan. Which policies do you think we should prioritise for publication during the first five years of the strategy?

Section 6 – Closing remarks

It is a great honour for the Welsh Government to take the lead and set the direction in relation to planning for the Welsh language. Our aim is to put solid foundations in place to enable more people to speak Welsh, so that they then have the freedom to use it as they wish – to communicate, learn, work, create and enjoy.

In this draft strategy, we have set the challenge of reaching a million speakers by 2050, and have provided the context to explain the starting point. We have also outlined our long term vision in relation to issues which are common to so many of the world's languages.

We believe that our strategic areas – Planning, Normalisation, Education, People, Support, and Rights – outline the steps we need to take. We also recognise that we don't have all the answers, and that Welsh is a language for all of us and therefore everyone's responsibility, be they individuals, local authorities, businesses or government.

Your response to the consultation will guide our approach towards creating a million Welsh speakers over the next three decades and more.